

Jesse Juen
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
New Mexico State Office
PO Box 27115
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

Dear Director Juen,

My name is James Benson and I am a native of Abiquiu as well as a small scale farmer and father of two who lives and works on the Rio Chama below Abiquiu reservoir. I am writing to protest the proposed sales of parcels NM-201410-001, 004 thru 015 that will be offered up for lease in the BLM Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale, October 22, 2014.

I would like to reiterate what has been stated so many times before: A finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the October 22, 2014 Oil and Gas Lease Sale is not adequately supported by the Environmental Assessment as it now stands. Quoting from the EA: "An assumption is that the No Action Alternative (no lease option) would not affect current domestic production of oil and gas." In other words, there are not major oil and gas reserves.

I am very concerned about these prospective leases because as a farmer and lifelong resident here I understand the importance as well as the scarcity of clean water to our way of life. My existence and lifestyle is predicated on the health of the land and therefore of the watershed. In this time of scarcity I find it entirely unreasonable to allocate 2-10 million gallons of water PER WELL to hydraulic fracturing at the certain expense of local residents and agriculture.

The Morrison Formation is a crucial aquifer in the Rio Chama Watershed. The Rio Chama flows to the which delivers over half of the water for the entire state. This water is already legally allocated to downstream users. Contamination of the Morrison Formation aquifer would have disastrous effects for us all.

Chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing have been conclusively linked to cancer, and other serious health problems. There are far too many examples of spills and groundwater contamination from hydraulic fracturing, despite the "efforts" of private oil and gas companies.

The risk of polluting our limited water supply is too serious to ignore. If our water is affected it is us, the local people and our children who will have to live with the long term effects, not these companies. In 2011 the House of Representatives reported that of 2,500 fracking products, 650 contain known carcinogens.

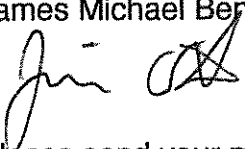
The Abiquiu Reservoir and Heron Lake are placed near several known fault lines. Injection wells, which are often used to dispose of waste-water, as well as degradation of bedrock, are known to cause seismic activity. Earthquakes have not been addressed

at all in the BLM Environmental Assessment (EA).

In short the negative effects of these leases for the local community and our way of life as well as the continued integrity of our environment and the well-being of our land and children far outweigh any short-term economic benefits which may or may not be forthcoming.

I urge you for the good of the people and the land to defer leases on these parcels. My daughters will thank you.

Sincerely,
James Michael Benson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Benson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Please send your mandatory response to my address of record:

James Benson
HC 84 Box 1B
Abiquiu NM 87510